

machine gun emplacements, trenches, etc. Went about two miles beyond the city to examine trenches, shelters, both concrete and earth, wire entanglements, etc. Also examined plans for blowing up roads and bridges and the location of the charges. I visited the old location of one of the large engineer dumps and work shops. These were moved further back on account of the constant shelling of this area. The city, which formerly contained about 12,000 is entirely deserted and is being slowly demolished. The large church has thus far escaped any injury. This is the first region I have been in that is really in the throes of the war. It sure does look its part. Overhead there were six or eight stationary observation balloons. These are constantly being fired at by the Germans and you can see the shells bursting near them. Only *occasionally* is one hit. Their greatest danger is when a German airplane darts over the line and attacks them. The men in the balloons are warned and jump with parachutes. In nearly all cases they reach the ground safely. One day a plane attacked three of the balloons, destroyed all of them. The men all got out but the parachute of one failed to open and he was killed. While this sector was quiet today, I felt for the first time that I was really in the fighting zone. Shells were exploding near by and you never know when one might fall right by you.

Our own work southeast and east of Cassel is nearer the German line than up here, but there has been no shelling of the area since we began the work. There are plenty of shell holes around showing that the German artillery have registered and that they know the range and the direction. Direction from Mount Kemmel, Road to Ypres, etc. A good many of the soldiers of the 30th Division are in camp north of "Pops," and had to march through this shelled area. There were no shells falling near them but they could hear them. They march in such an area, in one-half platoon and fifty to a hundred yards between each one-half platoon, so that if a shell hits a group or near a group it will not kill any except in the one group. I felt sorry for the boys, coming into such an area for the first time. They will get hardened to it, and after being up at the front line will be thankful to get back to "such an area." They did not know where they were going, where they were to sleep or eat. They were beginning to feel and taste the *real war*. -It is a "taste." I have tasted it and *it is real*. I try to smile no matter what is going on and